

## ***Chapter 5: CATALYTIC PROJECTS***

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Catalytic projects implement key aspects of the plan and spur activity, investment, and redevelopment. Because these projects are expected to produce these effects in the area surrounding the projects as well as the in the projects themselves, they are called catalytic. This chapter describes eight catalytic projects. Some of them may already be underway, in which case, the plan supports their continuation. Some can and should begin immediately. Other projects require a longer view and are contingent on decisions regarding privately owned land; these projects require land that may become available in the next few years. The plan suggests redevelopment concepts for these sites that promote the goals of the overall plan.

### 27TH STREET “MAIN STREET”

#### Catalytic Project Boundaries

28<sup>th</sup> Street to the west; 26<sup>th</sup> Street to the east; Michigan Avenue to the south; State Street to the north.



#### Rationale

The economic revitalization of 27<sup>th</sup> Street is of strategic importance to the Near West Side renaissance. The corridor from Wisconsin Avenue to State Street was at one time and could again become a main neighborhood-shopping street—a central node of activity for the Near West Side Community.

#### Goal

Enhance and build upon existing commercial assets along 27<sup>th</sup> Street to create an active Main Street and increase attractiveness of the surrounding residential properties.





Neighborhood shopping along 27th St.

### Objectives

- Strengthen the area's economic base and create new opportunities through appropriate development.
- Encourage specialty retail, artsy district with live work units on the second floors and above.
- Enhance the area's physical appearance through building rehabilitation, compatible new construction, and public improvements.
- Increase the cohesiveness of the business district.
- Increase attractiveness and assessed values of the existing commercial and surrounding residential properties.

### Recommendations

- Apply for Milwaukee Main Street Designation.
- Create a Tax Increment District and Targeted Investment Neighborhood.
- Allow only new commercial uses along the street frontage to create an active Main Street.
- Promote/encourage relocation of non-commercial, non-taxable uses from street level to upper floors or elsewhere in the neighborhood.
- Redevelop 27<sup>th</sup> Street/Wisconsin Avenue intersection with a specialty food store/auxiliary bank, hardware, and/or office supply store.
- Market the corridor through events and advertising.
- Provide unified streetscape amenities which could include planters, trash cans, benches, harp lights, and colored sidewalk/crosswalk pavings.
- Waive the minimum parking requirements stated in the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

### Recommended Responsible Parties

- City of Milwaukee, Department of City Development (TID, Main Street designation, TIN)
- LISC (Main Street Application)
- Avenues West Association (Marketing, Streetscaping)
- Private Investors/Developers

## 35TH STREET AREA REDEVELOPMENT

### Catalytic Project Boundaries

35<sup>th</sup> Street to the east; Miller Valley to the west; Wisconsin Avenue to the south; and Kilbourn Avenue to the north.



### Rationale

Ameritech owns a large land area that, when redeveloped, will have a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhood. Given the quantity of vacant and underutilized land at such a prominent location within the Near West Side, this area offers opportunity to attract high-quality, commercial and retail uses.

### Goal

Attract high-quality commercial and retail uses.



### **Objectives**

- Attract development that will have a positive impact on the community.
- Strengthen the area's economic base and create new opportunities through appropriate development.
- Increase attractiveness and assessed values of the existing commercial and surrounding residential properties.
- Add taxable development to increase city tax base.
- Support and bolster commercial activity along 35<sup>th</sup> Street and Wisconsin Avenue.

### **Recommendations**

- Establish Renewal District Boundaries/Draft a Renewal Plan.
- Create a Tax Increment Financing District.
- Assemble Properties for future development of grocery store, hardware store, office supply store, etc.

### **Responsible Parties**

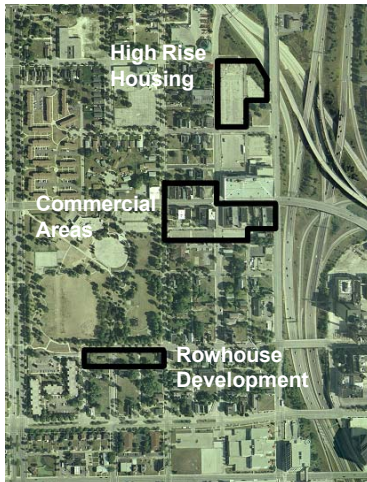
- City of Milwaukee (Renewal Plan, TIF, land assembly)
- Ameritech (current land owner)
- Current and Future Property Owners/Investors/Developers



## VLIET STREET AREA REVITALIZATION

### Catalytic Project Boundaries

Galena Street to the north; Highland Avenue to the south; 14<sup>th</sup> Street to the west (16<sup>th</sup> between Highland and the Park); 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the east.



### Rationale

The Vliet Street Area identified offers excellent family supporting opportunities in the immediate area including existing schools, hospitals, post office facilities, public transit, and county park. The redevelopment of the Pabst Site and the Marcia P. Cogg's Services Center will be extremely influential in generating redevelopment interest in the area and could, with the assistance of public/private partnerships, comprehensively transform the area into a high-quality example of rehabilitation.



### Goal

Revitalization of the Vliet Street Area Housing and Commercial Node.



12th and Vliet St. commercial



New residential high-rise along 12th and Vliet St.

## Objectives

- Build upon the Pabst Redevelopment investment and momentum.
- Make available residential units with great views of the downtown skyline.
- Add taxable housing units to increase city tax base.
- Add residential population to support commercial development and revitalization efforts on Vliet Street.
- Support and bolster commercial activity at Vliet Street Commercial Node (12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> Streets).
- Spur additional investment and substantial amounts of residential and commercial rehabilitation in the district.



## Recommendations

- Promote the development of new residential high-rise on previously underutilized, county-owned property that affords great views of Milwaukee's downtown skyline.
- Promote the development of residential housing in the form of row-houses or other densely developed units on the property located along the south side of Juneau Avenue and 14<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Promote/encourage relocation of non-commercial, non-taxable uses along Vliet Street from street level to upper floors or elsewhere in the neighborhood.
- Offer facade grants to existing commercial establishments along Vliet Street between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- Promote the relocation of the Post Office building from McKinley Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Vliet Street between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- Explore the possibility of relocating the State Correction Center.
- Replace chain link fencing with wrought iron fencing surrounding the city owned parking lot between McKinley and Vliet Streets.
- Explore the opportunity to convert the city owned parking lot to



## CITY ON A HILL

### Catalytic Project Boundaries

State Street to the north; Kilbourn Street to the south; 19th Street to the east; and 24th Street to the west.



### Rationale

City on a Hill (former Good Samaritan Hospital) is a large land area that, when redeveloped, will have a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. The redevelopment would fill a hole in the neighborhood with housing options and entrepreneur training facilities, increasing the city tax base and owner occupancy rate within the Near West Side.

### Goal

Attract housing development into a “qualified census tract” to provide housing options that are currently not available in the immediate area.



City on the Hill - West Lot



### Objectives

- Attract development that will have a positive impact on the community and will meet the educational, social, and spiritual needs.
- Develop mixed income housing.
- Attract residents that can walk to work.
- Build upon and expand the existing high-tech infrastructure.



### Recommendations

- Utilize main building lower floors for educational and human resource needs including space for entrepreneur training.
- Convert upper levels into unique “garden loft” market-rate apartments with eventual conversion to condominiums in 15-20 years.
- Rehabilitate/reconstruct the parking structure along Kilbourn Street.
- Convert the surface parking lot along 21<sup>st</sup> Street to an infill TND subdivision.
- Actively recruit workers from Ameritech, Center for Independence, Marquette University, etc. to relocate into new housing options.



### Responsible Parties

- City on the Hill (owner)
- Private Investors/Developers
- Neighborhood Stakeholders

## WISCONSIN AVENUE ENHANCED TRANSIT OPPORTUNITIES/AMENITIES

### Catalytic Project Boundaries

Wisconsin Avenue from 16<sup>th</sup> to 35<sup>th</sup> Streets.



### Rationale

Wisconsin Avenue is both the gateway and Main Street of Milwaukee's downtown— home to Marquette University, Midwest Express Center, Grand Avenue Mall, and Milwaukee Central Library. It is also the most heavily traveled transit corridor carrying over 1,200 bus trips per day. Nowhere in the City would commitments to improving the transit facilities and amenities compliment economic activity with greater impact on surrounding neighborhoods than the Wisconsin Avenue corridor. Encouraging people to ride transit takes more than just providing bus routes and stops. People must feel comfortable and safe.

### Goal

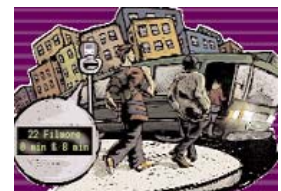
Enhance existing and provide additional transit opportunities/amenities.



Pedestrian and transit-friendly character along Wisconsin Ave.

### Objectives

- Build upon the established multi-modal right of way to increase the walkability and transit-friendly character of the corridor.
- Maintain and promote two-way travel.
- Emphasize the movement of more people, rather than the movement of more vehicles, when making investment decisions.



### Recommendations

- Encourage all development projects along the corridor to incorporate site design measures that enhance access to the transit system.
- Initiate Pilot Program along the corridor in which ITS bus monitors displaying real time/up to the minute bus schedules are placed in various bus stations.
- Support the Downtown Connector project locating along Wisconsin Avenue.
- Develop 35<sup>th</sup> Street/Wisconsin Avenue as a mixed use 3-4 story transit-oriented development with potential tourist theme (museum, restaurant etc).



### Recommended Responsible Parties

- Milwaukee Transit Authority
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Avenues West Association
- Marquette University
- Private Land Owners/Developers

## NORRIS PLAYGROUND CONVERSION TO COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE

### Catalytic Project Boundaries

State Street to the north; Kilbourn Street to the south; 19<sup>th</sup> Street to the west; 18<sup>th</sup> to the east.



### Rationale

Norris Playground currently occupies almost an entire city block and consists almost entirely of deteriorating asphalt. The project proposes to remove the unattractive existing surface and rehabilitate the parcel into appealing green space. By doing so, the project will optimize the use of this land by converting an underutilized and virtually vacant plot into the highly utilized multi-purpose asset to the community.



This is a unique opportunity for the city to develop a sustained relationship with a local agency or institution eager to make substantial improvements to the community. The community will gain open space from an area that currently houses only potential. The institution, situated in a dense urban environment where space is always at a premium, will gain the valuable and rare asset of developable space. The community and the institution would each profoundly benefit from a shared use of the space. Their collective needs would generate substantial use for an area currently finding minimal use.

Also, the green space would significantly add value to surrounding occupied parcels and to future occupied parcels.

### Goal

Develop community green space to meet the needs of diverse groups of people including those of nearby institutions through an innovative financing agreement. Increase the value of surrounding properties.



### Objectives

- Provide the resource of appealing public green space in intensely developed areas.
- Use open space to create and add value to the adjacent residential properties, including the undeveloped empty parcels of land.



### Recommendations

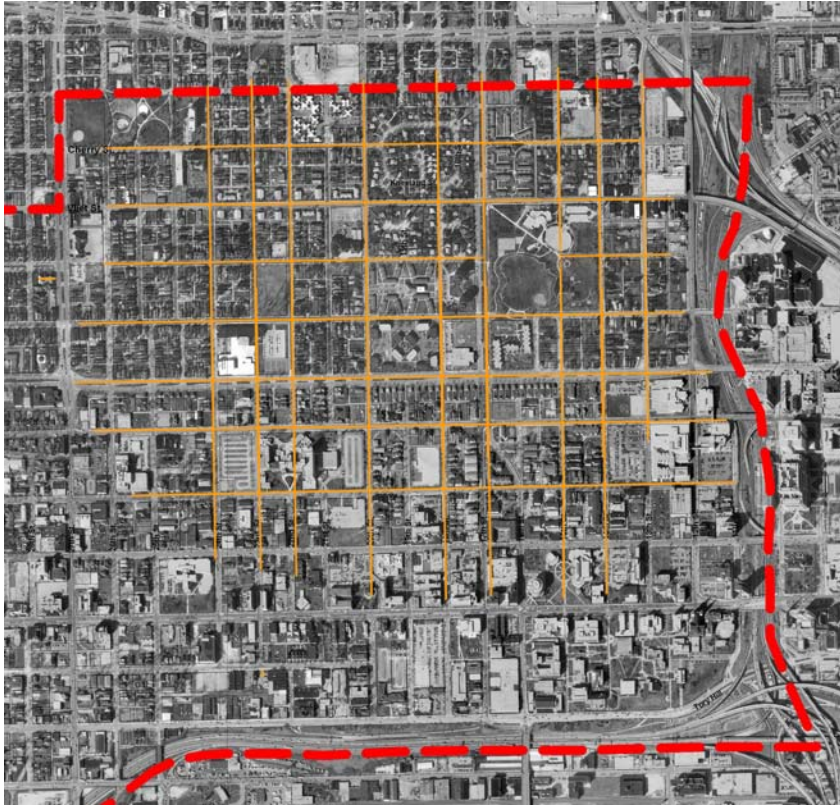
- Convert Norris Playground from asphalt to grass and provide additional landscaping.
- Seek an agency or institution interested in financing improvements to the underutilized land. Costs will include excavation, renovation, possible architectural additions, and extensive landscaping.
- Establish an arrangement with an agency or institution for the sustained costs of administration and maintenance of the publicly accessible open space and its facilities.
- Formulate a financial agreement reserving the agency or institution certain and specific rights to the space in exchange for the contribution to both the initial and the sustained project costs.
- Install amenities in and around the perimeter of the park. Possible ideas include a walking path, a rope course, a small playground, or other similar facilities.
- Replace the extensive chain link fencing with a higher quality and design of fencing and landscaping.
- Encourage and support infill single-family and duplex homes surrounding the community space.



## RECONNECTION OF THE STREET GRID

### Catalytic Project Boundaries

Near West Side Planning Area.



### Rationale

The removal of street closures will restore the historic traffic pattern of the planning area and offer more travel options. Route alternatives will result in reduced traffic volumes along the more congested streets, provide travelers more direct routes to their destinations, while also increasing pedestrian safety along the routes by increasing surveillance and “eyes on the street.”

### Goal

Support the street system based on the one-mile grid and increase transportation route alternatives by removing cul-de-sacs and street closures and promoting two-way travel where public safety would not be decreased.

### Objectives

- Reconnect the street grid.
- Increase travel route options.
- Reduce traffic on more congested streets.
- Provide pedestrian and vehicular direct routes to destinations.
- Increase pedestrian safety along streets with current closures.

### **Recommendations**

- Reconnect Juneau Avenue between 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets for through traffic.
- Reconnect 19<sup>th</sup> Street between Highland and Juneau Avenue.
- Reconnect Cherry Street between 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- Remove cul-de-sac at 21<sup>st</sup> and McKinley Avenue; Reinststate the street grid.
- Reconnect 18<sup>th</sup> and 19th Streets between State and Highland
- Consider converting 17<sup>th</sup> Street to two-way travel.
- Reconnect 19<sup>th</sup> Street between Highland and McKinley Avenue.

### **Recommended Responsible Parties**

- City of Milwaukee, Department of Public Works
- Milwaukee County Department of Public Works
- Neighborhood Organizations/Residents

## INDIAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROPERTY

### Catalytic Project Boundaries

State Street to the north; Wells to the south; 31<sup>st</sup> to the east; and 33<sup>rd</sup> to the west.



### Rationale

The Indian Community School currently occupies a large land area. If and when the school relocates, reoccupation and/or redevelopment of the site will have a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

### Goal

Redevelopment of the site.

### Objectives

- Obtain compatible reuse of a soon to be unoccupied property.
- Attract development that will have a positive impact on the community.

### Recommendations

- Work with the Forest County Potawatomi to achieve appropriate redevelopment of the site after the Indian Community School relocates.

### Responsible Parties

- Forest County Potawatomi
- City of Milwaukee, Department of City Development
- Private Investors/Developers
- Neighborhood Stakeholders